(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to groom our travel sports into real charmers?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) National Tourism Policy 2002, recognizes the importance of domestic tourism, paricularly tourism connected with pilgrimage, and suggests it to be so designed that the infrastructure created under it serves as a backbone of international tourism in times to come. As per the information available from States/UTs, the number of domestic tourist visits in India in 2006 was 462 million as compared to 392 million in 2005.

(c) Development and promotion of tourist places/spots is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for development of tourism, on the basis of the proposals received from them, subject to availability of funds and *inter-se* priorities.

Special incentive scheme for budget hotels

1215. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any special incentive scheme to encourage budget hotels to boost tourism in the country in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular; and

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and the amount earmarked for such scheme?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Tourism has formulated a scheme, to provide incentive to hotels of 1 to 3 star and Heritage Basic categories all over the country where the hotels projects have been commissioned and classified w.e.f. 01.04.2007 to 31.03.2008. The incentive will be in the form of capital subsidy of Rs.2.00 lakh per room subject to a maximum of Rs. 30.00 lakh to one star hotel, Rs. 3.00 lakh per room subject to a maximum of Rs. 75.00 lakh to two star hotel, Rs. 3.00 lakh per room subject to a maximum of Rs. 100.00 lakh to three star and Heritage Basic category hotels.

The scheme is valid all over the country including the State of Andhra Pradesh. An amount of Rs. 20.00 crore have been earmarked for the financial year 2007-08.

Tourism related schemes

1216. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any scheme to carry out tourism related schemes, surveys, studies, plans, market research etc.;

(b) if so, the essential features of the scheme including the provision for financial assistance;

(c) whether any surveys, study, market research etc. has been carried out under the scheme for the State of Goa, exclusively or otherwise;

(d) the agencies which have carried out such work; and

(e) the details of financial assistance given to such agencies?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Tourism has been implementing a scheme "Market Research Professional Services" under which tourism related surveys, studies, market research, etc. are sponsored. The budget allocation for this scheme for financial year 2007-08 is Rs. 5 crore.

(c) to (e) During the year 2004, M/s. Datamation Consultants Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi was commissioned to conduct a Survey on Collection of Domestic Tourism Statistics for the State of Goa at a total cost of Rs. 11.64 lakh.

Visa-on-Arrival Scheme

1217. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry has asked the Ministry of Home Affairs to get the proposal regarding 'Visa-on-Arrival' be cleared;

(b) if so, the response of the Ministry of Home Affairs in this regard;

(c) whether the foreign tourists have been urging Government to introduce the Visa-on-Arrival Scheme; and

(d) by when the Visa-on-Arrival Scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. At present, the Ministry of Home Affairs has not agreed to this scheme due to the prevalent security scenario.

(d) Does not arise.

Threat of terrorism to tourist inflow

1218. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are many cancellations by operators bringing tourists to India due to threat of terrorism and other factors during the current year *i.e.* 2007-08; and

(b) if so, the details thereof State-wise particularly for Rajasthan, Kerala, Goa etc.?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) In 2007, an estimated 5.00 million tourists visited India and showed a growth of 12.4% over the last year. The foreign tourist arrivals for the month of January and February, 2008 has shown an increase of 9.9% and 12.4% respectively over the same period of 2007.

(b) Does not arise.

Safety of tourists

†1219. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:
SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase recently in the incidents of teasing and looting with the foreign tourists;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.